



## Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 533**

February Session, 2006

Substitute Senate Bill No. 626

*Senate, April 18, 2006*

The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. HARP of the 10th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

### **AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL READINESS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subdivision (1) of subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the  
2 2006 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following  
3 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

4 (e) (1) Priority school districts and former priority school districts  
5 shall receive grants based on their proportional share of the sum of the  
6 products obtained by multiplying the average number of enrolled  
7 kindergarten students in each priority school district and in each  
8 former priority school district for the three years prior to the year the  
9 grant is to be paid, by the ratio of the average percentage of free and  
10 reduced price meals for all severe need schools in such district to the  
11 minimum percentage requirement for severe need school eligibility,  
12 provided no such school district shall receive a grant that (A) is less  
13 than the grant it received for the prior fiscal year, including any  
14 supplemental grants received in the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005,  
15 and any funds carried forward from the fiscal year ending June 30,

16 2004, (B) provides for fewer full-day or part-day spaces than the grant  
17 it received for the prior fiscal year, or [a grant that] (C) is less than one  
18 hundred fifty thousand dollars. Notwithstanding the provisions of this  
19 subdivision, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, the towns of  
20 Ansonia, Bloomfield, Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford,  
21 Meriden, Hartford, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New  
22 London, Norwalk, Norwich, Putnam, Stamford, Waterbury, West  
23 Haven and Windham shall each receive a grant that is no less than the  
24 grant it received for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005, including any  
25 supplemental grants received in said fiscal year.

26 Sec. 2. Subsection (c) of section 17b-749c of the 2006 supplement to  
27 the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
28 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

29 (c) The grants shall be used to:

30 (1) Help providers who are not accredited by the National  
31 Association for the Education of Young Children to obtain such  
32 accreditation and to help accredited providers maintain their  
33 accreditation;

34 (2) Help directors and administrators to obtain training;

35 (3) Provide comprehensive services, such as enhanced access to  
36 health care, a health consultant, a mental health consultant, nutrition,  
37 family support services, parent education, literacy and parental  
38 involvement, and community and home and homeless shelter outreach  
39 programs; and provide information concerning access when needed to  
40 a speech and language therapist;

41 (4) Purchase educational equipment;

42 (5) Provide scholarships for training to obtain a credential in early  
43 childhood education or child development;

44 (6) Provide training for persons who are mentor teachers, as defined  
45 in federal regulations for the Head Start program, and provide a

46 family service coordinator or a family service worker as such positions  
47 are defined in such federal regulations;

48 (7) Repair fire, health and safety problems in existing facilities and  
49 conduct minor remodeling to comply with the Americans with  
50 Disabilities Act; train child care providers on injury and illness  
51 prevention; and achieve compliance with national safety standards;

52 (8) Create a supportive network with family day care homes and  
53 other providers of care for children;

54 (9) Provide for educational consultation and staff development;

55 (10) Provide for program quality assurance personnel;

56 (11) Provide technical assistance services to enable providers to  
57 develop child care facilities pursuant to sections 17b-749g, 17b-749h  
58 and 17b-749i;

59 (12) Establish a single point of entry system;

60 (13) Provide services that enhance the quality of programs to  
61 maximize the health, safety and learning of children from birth to three  
62 years of age, inclusive, including, but not limited to, those children  
63 served by informal child care arrangements. Such grants may be used  
64 for the improvement of staff to child ratios and interaction, initiatives  
65 to promote staff retention, preliteracy development, parent  
66 involvement, curriculum content and lesson plans.

67 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) In addition to any grant  
68 provided pursuant to section 17b-749c of the 2006 supplement to the  
69 general statutes, as amended by this act, the Department of Social  
70 Services shall provide, within available appropriations, grants to  
71 school readiness programs, as defined in subdivision (1) of subsection  
72 (a) of section 10-16p of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes, in  
73 the amount of four per cent of the program's budget. Such grants shall  
74 be used in accordance with the provisions of subsection (c) of said  
75 section 17b-749c.

76       Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2006*) The Departments of Education  
77 and Social Services shall require full-day and half-day pilot preschool  
78 programs that receive funds from the state to comply with the quality  
79 and oversight requirements for school readiness programs receiving  
80 funds pursuant to sections 10-16p to 10-16u, inclusive, of the 2006  
81 supplement to the general statutes, as amended by this act.

82       Sec. 5. Section 10-10a of the general statutes is amended by adding  
83 subsections (d) and (e) as follows (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

84       (NEW) (d) Local and regional boards of education and preschool  
85 programs which receive state and federal funding shall participate, in  
86 a manner prescribed by the Commissioner of Education, in the state-  
87 wide public school information system described in subsection (a) of  
88 this section. Participation for purposes of this subsection shall include,  
89 but not be limited to, reporting on (1) student experiences in preschool  
90 by program type and by numbers of months in each such program,  
91 and (2) the readiness of students for kindergarten and student progress  
92 in kindergarten. Such reporting shall be done by October 1, 2007, and  
93 annually thereafter.

94       (NEW) (e) Not later than April 1, 2010, and biennially thereafter, the  
95 Department of Education shall prepare a report on the readiness of  
96 students for kindergarten and their progress in kindergarten. Such  
97 report shall include information on (1) student readiness and progress  
98 in reading, language development, number concepts and other areas  
99 as may be determined by the Commissioner of Education, (2) the  
100 relationship between such readiness and progress and the number of  
101 months and type of preschool experience of such students, and (3) the  
102 characteristics of such students with respect to race, English  
103 proficiency, special education and economic status as determined by  
104 free and reduced lunch eligibility. The commissioner shall submit such  
105 report, in accordance with section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the  
106 joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance  
107 of matters relating to education.

108       Sec. 6. Subdivision (3) of subsection (e) of section 10-16p of the 2006

109 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is  
110 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

111 (3) If a town that is eligible for a grant pursuant to subsection (c) of  
112 this section does not submit, by October first, a plan which is  
113 subsequently approved for the expenditure of the entire amount of  
114 funds for which such town is eligible, the department may use [up to  
115 seventy per cent of any amounts] funds that such town has not  
116 earmarked for expenditure, to provide supplemental grants to other  
117 towns that are eligible for grants pursuant to subsection (c) of this  
118 section, [and the remaining thirty per cent of any amounts such town  
119 has not earmarked for expenditure,] for school readiness professional  
120 development, including, but not limited to, scholarship assistance for  
121 school readiness staff to attain early childhood education certification  
122 and staff training to enhance literacy teaching skills, and to conduct  
123 activities related to preschool and kindergarten student developmental  
124 evaluations or assessments.

125 Sec. 7. Subsection (b) of section 10-16q of the 2006 supplement to the  
126 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
127 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2006*):

128 (b) (1) For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006, the per child cost of  
129 the Department of Education school readiness component of the  
130 program offered by a school readiness provider shall not exceed six  
131 thousand six hundred fifty dollars.

132 (2) For fiscal year ending June 30, 2007, and each fiscal year  
133 thereafter, the per child cost of the Department of Education school  
134 readiness component of the program offered by a school readiness  
135 provider shall not exceed six thousand nine hundred twenty-five  
136 dollars. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (e) of section 10-  
137 16p of the 2006 supplement to the general statutes, as amended by this  
138 act, the per child cost of the Department of Education school readiness  
139 component of the program offered by a school readiness provider shall  
140 be reduced by ten per cent for any provider that is not accredited on or  
141 before January 1, 2007.

142 (3) A school readiness provider may provide child day care services  
143 and the cost of such child day care services shall not be subject to such  
144 per child cost limitation.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	10-16p(e)(1)
Sec. 2	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	17b-749c(c)
Sec. 3	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	10-10a
Sec. 6	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	10-16p(e)(3)
Sec. 7	<i>July 1, 2006</i>	10-16q(b)

**ED**            *Joint Favorable Subst. C/R*

APP

**APP**            *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

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### ***OFA Fiscal Note***

#### ***State Impact:***

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 07 \$	FY 08 \$
Education, Dept.	GF - Cost	Potential	Potential

Note: GF=General Fund

#### ***Municipal Impact:***

Municipalities	Effect	FY 07 \$	FY 08 \$
Various Municipalities	Revenue Gain	Potential	Potential

### ***Explanation***

The bill's requirement that certain school districts receive a grant at least equal to what they received in FY 05, including any supplemental aid, results in a potential cost to the State Department of Education and a potential revenue gain to local and regional school districts. There are sufficient funds in the existing FY 07 budget and the proposed FY 07 budget of both the governor and the Appropriations Committee to satisfy this requirement.

All other portions of the bill are technical and/or have no fiscal impact.

### ***The Out Years***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

**OLR Bill Analysis****sSB 626*****AN ACT CONCERNING SCHOOL READINESS.*****SUMMARY:**

For FY 07, this bill requires certain priority and former priority districts to receive a grant of at least what it received in FY 05, including any supplemental grants received in that year. For every other year, the bill requires funds carried forward from FY 04 to count as part of the previous year's school readiness grant in determining the hold harmless amount for current and former priority school districts and prohibits them from receiving a grant that provides for fewer full- or part-day spots than the previous year. The bill also imposes a penalty on unaccredited programs by reducing by 10% the per child cost for the State Department of Education's (SDE) school readiness program component.

The bill creates additional uses for Department of Social Services (DSS) quality enhancement grants and requires the agency to provide additional funds to school readiness programs. It requires SDE and DSS to require state-funded full- and half-day pilot preschool programs to comply with the existing quality enhancement and oversight requirements for school readiness programs.

It requires state-funded preschool programs to provide information to the statewide information network and requires SDE to prepare a report on students' readiness for and progress in kindergarten. It also changes allowable uses and amounts of school readiness funds by SDE that programs have not earmarked for expenditure by a certain date.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2006



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**SCHOOL READINESS GRANTS FOR PRIORITY AND FORMER PRIORITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS*****Grant Distribution Provisions***

By law, school readiness funds for priority and former priority districts are distributed according to (1) their relative average kindergarten enrollment for three years prior to the grant and (2) the ratio of the average number of free and reduced-price school lunches served in their severe-need schools to the minimum percentage needed for severe-need school designation. Under current law, no district can receive a grant less than the statutory grant it received in the previous year, including any supplemental grants it received for FY 05, or \$150,000. The bill requires any funds carried forward from FY 04 to also count as part of the previous year's grant when determining the hold-harmless level. It also prohibits districts from receiving a grant that provides for fewer full- or part-day spaces than the grant it received in the prior year.

However, for FY 07, the bill sets a different minimum grant for certain current and former priority school districts. It entitles these districts to a FY 07 grant that at least equals their FY 05 grant, including any supplemental grants, rather than what they received in FY 06 (the prior fiscal year) or \$150,000, as required under current law. The districts are: Ansonia, Bloomfield, Bridgeport, Bristol, Danbury, East Hartford, Meriden, Hartford, Middletown, New Britain, New Haven, New London, Norwalk, Norwich, Putnam, Stamford, Waterbury, West Haven, and Windham.

***Penalty for Lack of Accreditation***

The law imposes a \$6,925 per child limit on the cost of the SDE's school readiness program component. Despite the statutory grant distribution provisions, the bill reduces this amount by 10% for any provider not accredited by January 1, 2007. According to current law, the grants are already limited to providing spaces in accredited programs.

**DSS GRANTS**

**Quality Enhancement Grants**

Child day care and school readiness service providers must use DSS supplemental quality enhancement grants for statutorily prescribed purposes. The bill allows providers to use the funds to maintain, rather than just to obtain, National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation. The law allows the grants to be used for comprehensive services, including community and home outreach programs. The bill includes homeless shelter outreach programs.

Other existing required uses for the funds include training, equipment, scholarships to obtain credentials, staff positions, repairs, creating a supportive network with family day care home and other childcare providers, technical assistance, providing a single point of entry system, and quality enhancement for birth to three programs.

**Additional DSS Grants**

The bill requires DSS to provide, within available appropriations, grants to school readiness programs in the amount of four percent of that program's budget. The funds must be used for the same purposes as the quality enhancement grants and are in addition to those funds. A school readiness program is one that (1) is non sectarian; (2) meets SDE standards; and (3) unless it meets a limited exception, provides a developmentally appropriate learning experience of at least 450 hours and 180 days for eligible children.

**REPORTING AND DATA COLLECTION**

SDE is required by law to maintain a statewide public school information system. The bill requires boards of education and state-funded preschool programs to participate in this information system by reporting on at least the following subjects in a manner prescribed by the education commissioner: (1) student experiences in preschools by program type and number of months in each such program and (2) student readiness for and progress in kindergarten. The reporting must be done annually beginning by October 1, 2007.

The bill also requires SDE, by April 1, 2010 and every two years

thereafter, to (1) prepare a report on students' readiness for and progress in kindergarten and (2) submit it to the Education Committee. The report must include information on the following:

1. student readiness and progress in reading, language development, number concepts, and other areas the education commissioner determines;
2. the relationship between such students' readiness and progress and the duration and type of their preschool program; and
3. the students' race, English proficiency, special education requirements, and economic status as determined by free and reduced lunch eligibility.

#### **USE OF GRANT FUNDS NOT EARMARKED FOR EXPENDITURE**

By law, a town must submit a plan to SDE by October 1 for spending all the non-competitive grant funds for which it is eligible. Otherwise, under current law, SDE can use 70% of the unallocated funds to provide supplemental grants to other eligible towns and 30% of those funds for school readiness professional development. The bill allows SDE to determine the distribution of funds between these purposes and allows it also to use the funds to conduct activities related to preschool and kindergarten student development evaluations or assessments.

#### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Education Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference  
Yea 29 Nay 0 (03/22/2006)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable  
Yea 52 Nay 0 (03/31/2006)